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THE EFFECTS OF THE WAR ON FRANCE.

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# B I B L I O G R A P H Y.

- Living Age, April 26, 1919.
- Review of Reviews, 59:167-75
- Atlantic Monthly, 123:501-7
- Survey, 41: 607-11
- Reports of French Minister of Interior.
- Report of Office of Reconstitution Agricole to Minister of Liberated Regions, May, 1918.
- Report of Service of Forests and Water Supply, French Department of Agriculture.
- M. Dubois --- Report to Chamber of Deputies, December 19, 1918.
- Report of Minister of Liberated Regions, August 5, 1918.
- Eighteen Months of Personal Observation in France by the Writer during the Period of the War.

A. INTRODUCTION.

Consider a nation, torn by over four years of the most devastating strife; ravaged by invading armies and occupied by friendly ones; compelled to bear the brunt of the greatest mortal conflict that the world has ever known; her agricultural land ruined and her richest territory in the hands of the enemy; her mines flooded, her manufacturing destroyed, her national life and health jeopardized; facing a labor shortage and exposed to internal dangers from radical labor elements; her finest intellectual talent sacrificed on the altar of freedom; two and one-half million of her best men dead or incapacitated; her women driven by poverty and temptation to lives of shame, and her moral standards practically destroyed, and you will have some faint idea of the condition in which France came out of the great world conflict.

B. THEESIS.

I. Reasons for the Devastation of France.

That we may better understand conditions and know the reasons for Germany's great and systematic destruction in northern France, let us consider a few of the facts in connection with the case.

We must remember that the present great war between democracy and autocracy was but a repetition of others that had been waged on this very same ground for the very same principles. For was it not on the banks of the Marne that Attila and his Huns were defeated and turned back? And was it not there also that Republican France from 1792

to 1791 defended the principles of freedom against the allied enemies from the north. Truly this section of France had been the battle ground for the liberties of modern Europe. It is hard for those who do not know the role that the north and east played in the material existence of France to understand why the Germans devoted themselves to this business of unnecessary destruction and massacre. On the other hand, the motive of destruction is manifest when one learns by statistics the importance in the material economy of the occupied and devastated territories.

To blot out those prosperous and productive districts of the north and east of France was, in the eyes of the Germans in 1914, to make all resistance impossible, because the principal centers of production of metals and coal, indispensable for carrying on the war, were in the Departments of the Nord, of the Ardennes, and of Meurthe-et-Moselle. They were protected by no defensive works, for Belgium, whose neutrality had been guaranteed by Germany, seemed to shelter the northern frontier of France from invasion from that direction. When Germany saw that, despite the occupation of Northern France, the military resistance continued, and that the ingenuity of the national character, supplemented by importations of raw materials, especially from the United States, was prolonging the war, she decided to destroy systematically the agriculture and industry of Flanders and Western France. She knew that by carrying out this barbarous plan she would deprive France of all possibil-

ity of expertation for many years. Whatever the military result of the conflict, she would have won an economic victory. And that was the thing which was of the most importance to her.

## II. Devastation in Invaded Areas.

That Germany has done a very complete job of devastating is vouched for by any of us from the A. E. F. who have seen this section of northern France. George B. Ford says:

"So stupendous is the destruction in the devastated area in France that no one can begin to realize what it means. It is only by travelling day after day in an automobile through village after village and town after town, often where nothing is standing erect more than a few feet above the ground, that one can begin to have any conception of its enormity."

Of course the destruction varies a great deal in its completeness. Often where there has been only minor shell fire one finds just the roofs and windows gone; but again in towns like Vaux or Suippes, that have been through a terrific bombardment, one can hardly realize that he is passing what was formerly a village, so thoroughly churned up are the buildings and ground. In general, however, where there was a rapid advance or retreat, there was very little destruction; but in almost every place where the opposing armies faced each other for a considerable length of time in one spot, the destruction was intense and complete. For example, in the great German drive of September, 1914, very little destruction was caused, but at the places where the hardest fighting



occurred at the turning of the battle of the Marne, that is, near Meaux, Sezanne, Vitry-le-Francois and Revinney, for a narrow fringe where the battle was hardest, everything is destroyed. Also along the battlefronts in the Somme and Aisne, where the hardest fighting took place, the devastation is complete and extends over a belt about ten or twelve miles wide at most.

The other kind of destruction was the wilful destruction of the retreating enemy, as in the Somme, the Oise and the Aisne, in the spring of 1917. In the first part of the retreat only minor destruction took place, but over the latter part of their retreat, they had time to do a thorough piece of work, with the result that a wide belt east of Peronne, Ham and Noyon was completely destroyed. This was also true in the retreat of the fall of 1918.

It is interesting to see how the destruction developed. For instance, in September, 1914, at the time of the great German advance, and during the battle of the Marne, there was comparatively little destruction in the North and in Champagne. It is only when we get down to the Marne, Meuse, Meurthe-et-Moselle and the Vosges that we find any great destruction. For example, in the Marne, 258 communes were damaged, including a total of 3,500 buildings entirely destroyed, and nearly 12,000 partially destroyed, and 40 communes remained on the German side of the lines; in the Meuse, 59 communes were damaged, with about 1800 buildings completely destroyed, and nearly 700 partially destroyed, with 238 communes remaining in the hands of the Germans: in the Vosges 53 communes were

damaged, with a total of 1,256 buildings completely destroyed, and 2,000 partially destroyed, with 25 communes remaining in the hands of the Germans. In the Marne and Meuse, most of the destruction took place during the battle of the Marne along both sides of the line where the fighting was heaviest. It started in at Meaux and did not get really serious until near Soissons. Then in the farming villages south of Chalons-sur-Marne and west of Vitry-le-François, running up past Reims and Bar-le-Duc and Verdun down to St. Mihiel and Commercy, the destruction by shell fire was intense. This makes a belt about 150 miles long where the destroyed area is anywhere from 5 to 10 miles wide. Around Nancy, there is comparatively little destruction, but north and east of Nancy, the destruction is again very serious, almost all shell fire, and includes cities like Lunéville, Gerbeville, (which was systematically burned), part of Rambervillers, St. Die, and so on down to the border to Alsace, where the buildings, especially in the larger town of Thionville, were largely destroyed. In addition, there were various cities behind the lines which were within range of German guns, and in which quite a little damage was done. This is especially true of Belfort, also of Bar-le-Duc, and to a lesser degree of Nancy.

In the German retreat in March, 1917, in the Somme, the Aisne and the Oise, in the first part, in the Oise and Aisne, they only partially destroyed the buildings usually by burning, so that in most instances the exterior

walls and partitions are standing in many buildings and could be repaired by putting a roof and putting windows and doors on. But east of a line extending from Noyon to Ham, and north of a line extending due west from Ham, the Germans had time systematically to turn and blow up almost all of the villages, with the result that destruction was so complete that it is possible to ride through a village without perceiving that it ever was one. At the time of

the German advance in March and in May, 1918, the Germans came within shelling and bombing range of a number of large cities and towns, so that today little is left of Hazebrouck, Bethune, Arras, Albert, Compiègne and Rheims, and severe destruction exists in Amiens, Clermont, Beauvais, Soissons, Epernay, Chalons, Bar-le-Duc, Toul and Nancy.

In the German retreat during the last months of the war, before the final drive, a large area southwest of Ham, which had been only partially destroyed, was completely destroyed. Included in this destroyed area were the cities of Noyon, Ham, Guiscard, Nesle, Roye, Soissons, Derbans and Fismes. The destruction around Peronne and Bapaume was so severe before, that very little more happened to them. During this period of the war the Allies won back from Germany 8,050 square miles of land in France, or an area nearly as large as Delaware, Connecticut and Rhode Island. It included about 2,000 communes and approximately 2,500,000 people, and comprised 3% of the area of France.

At the close of the first great German drive, the



total invaded area extended over 15,000 square miles, or something over 5% of the total area of France, including 3,000 communes, with a total population of over 4,000,000 people, and embracing the best manufacturing district and best farming country of France. This area is as large as that of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut combined.

In all, the devastated area in France covers approximately 6,000 square miles, about 2% of France, with a total population of nearly 2,000,000 people. This is about equal to the area of Rhode Island and Connecticut.

France now has Alsace and Lorraine, and these will be of great value in the reconstruction, because of their valuable products. Alsace and Lorraine contain 5,000 square miles and almost 2,000,000 inhabitants. They contain over a million acres of forests. Their principal products are hay and potatoes. In 1910, they produced 3,538,722 tons of coal, 20,083,238 tons of iron ore, and 102,144 tons of potash. The potash deposits are estimated at 2,000,000,000 tons. They produced about 3,000,000 tons of pig iron and 1,500,000 tons of steel. There were 5,691 textile plants, employing 81,000 persons, and containing nearly 2,000,000 cotton spindles.

The report of the minister of the Interior, given about the time of the cessation of hostilities, and covering 1223 communes in eleven departments, showed that in all these communes there had been more or less destruction. This number does not include 450 that were so

near the front as to make an accurate survey of the total losses impossible. The advance of the spring of 1917 freed 499 communes and reduced the number of communes in the hands of the Germans to 2,000. Most of these were not freed until after the Armistice had been signed.

Nearly all of these communes are strictly agricultural, so that the destruction hit particularly hard the exploitation of the richest farming area of France. It was reckoned, in 1,323 communes reported on near the close of 1917, that the total number of buildings damaged was 102,697, and that 50,736 of these were totally destroyed. Of these latter, 18,824 were in the Somme and 12,701 in the Aisne.

The hasty investigation since the signing of the Armistice shows that the total destruction in France is five times as great as the early report showed. Approximately 500,000 buildings were damaged, of which at least 250,000 were completely destroyed. The average cost of these buildings before the war was \$5,000. As the present cost of building is over three times what it was before the war, we can say that the total destruction in France of buildings alone is today over \$7,000,000,000, as estimated by government engineers, and over \$5,000,000,000, as estimated by the architects and contractors' associations. The total cost of repairing and replacing the used-up or destroyed public works is estimated at nearly \$3,000,000,000, of which \$300,000,000 is for the Nord railroad, \$225,000,000 for the Est, and \$75,000,000 for other railroads. \$300,000,000 will cover the rebuilding of the

canals. The Nord, alone, has lost 1,731 bridges and 338 stations. Reports issued before the war closed showed that there were about 600 communes in which at least one-half of the buildings had been completely destroyed. Late reports show that 1,500 communes have suffered in this proportion. The early report showed that in 400 communes 8% of the buildings had been damaged, but the final count shows that ~~and~~ were destroyed in at least 1,000 communes. There is estimated to be about 1100 city halls, 15,000 schools, 1,200 churches, and 1,000 other public buildings destroyed. Over 1,000 industrial plants, supporting at least half a million people, were entirely destroyed by the Germans in their effort to bring economic ruin on this section of France. The report of the Minister of the Interior on the building materials destroyed, which would have to be replaced, showed that the 250,000 buildings totally or approximately destroyed meant a loss of 1,000,000,000 cubic yards of stone masonry, 3,250,000 cubic yards of brick masonry, 2,000,000 tons of lime, etc. The largest part of this destruction was in Pas-de-Calais, and the next largest in Meurthe-et-Moselle. It also showed a destruction of over 1,000,000,000 feet of lumber and 150,000 tons of iron and steel. About 500,000,000 roof tiles were destroyed, and 150,000,000 roofing slates. The total loss of furniture and furnishings today, exclusive of machinery, amounts to about \$2,000,000,000, as estimated by insurance companies.

According to a report made by the Office de Recon-

stitution Agriculture to the Minister of Liberated Regions, in May, 1918, it was estimated that about 8,000 square miles of French land were in the hands of the Germans. About three-fourths of that area is tillable, and a large portion of the rest is good for hay or storage. This is some of the richest agricultural land in Europe.

The ten invaded and liberated departments produced in 1913 nearly \$400,000,000 worth of crops. The average yield of this land is about 32 bushels of wheat to the acre. In the same, this drops down to about 22 bushels, and in the Meuse and Meurthe-et-Moselle, it drops to 17 bushels. These regions constitute about 10% of the total tillable area of France, and the crops constitute about 20% of the total for France. The agricultural population here is about 3,700,000 people, or about 10% of the working agricultural population of France. It is estimated that 250,000 acres have been rendered impossible of cultivation by the war.

In this region, there are about 250,000 farms, of which 110,000 are less than 2½ acres each, and about 100,000 from 2½ acres to 100 acres; 5,500 farms are over 100 acres in size. A great many of these farms belong to people who are working in factories, which accounts for the large proportion of small farms. This is quite usual in France. The capital investment in these farms is reckoned at half a billion dollars, which would mean \$2,000 as the average per farm. Taking into account the great increase in prices during the war, the present value of these farms is over \$1,000,000,000, without counting the value of the buildings; and



and it would have a value of over \$4,000.

To get an idea of the number of agricultural implements that would be needed, a list was made by the government engineer in charge, which showed that to replace the losses there would be needed 51,000 side hill plows, 33,000 other plows, 56,000 cultivators, 30,000 mowing machines, 115,000 farm wagons, 61,000 barrows, 40,000 rollers, 4,000 hoes, 35,000 seed drills, 13,000 fertilizer spreaders, 16,000 beet extractors, 41,000 winnowing machines, 1,000 horse-carts, 34,000 reapers and binders, 53,000 root cutters, etc.

With regard to the cattle lost, it is very difficult to get the exact figures, but in these ten departments, in 1913, there were 607,000 cattle, while in 1915, there were 212,000, a loss of 65%. Of cattle of all kinds, there was a loss of 250,000, or 55%. Of pigs, the loss was 380,000, or about 55%.

The loss in wheat amounts to about 1,300,000 acres. In hay, it amounts to about 250,000 acres, and in sugar beets, to about 380,000 acres. The total damage done to the soil, to livestock, to crops, to forests, tools, etc., is estimated at over \$2,000,000,000.

Before the war, France used 59,407,000 tons of coal and 9,166,000 tons in coke equivalent per year. Of this, France produced about 41,000,000 tons of coal and 5,500,000 of coke equivalent, and the rest came from abroad. Of the amount produced in France, 27,389,000 tons came from the Valenciennes basin. In all, over 70% of the total coal supply of France came from the invaded regions, and very much



the best quality of coal, at least. Out of 203,800 coal miners for all of France, about 140,000 men were employed in these mines in the invaded regions. This means that, counting in the families, three-quarters of a million people were largely dependent on the coal mines. Over \$300,000,000 worth of machinery has probably been destroyed. Not only has the mining machinery been destroyed or carried away, but the mines have been flooded whenever possible. Millions of cubic gallons of water will have to be pumped out of these mines before new machinery can be installed and the mines again operated.

Before the war, the total production of iron ore in France was about 22,000,000 tons. Of this, over 14,620,000 tons came from the Briey and Longwy basins in the Meuse-et-Moselle, of which 16,500,000 tons were in the hands of the Germans. The miners who were employed in these invaded mines represented, with their families, at least 150,000 people who were out of employment. It is interesting to note that before the war the iron production of the Germans was 36,000,000 tons and of the United States 63,000,000 tons. Over half a billion dollars worth of machinery has been destroyed, including that of the iron and steel mills. Before the war, 3,000,000 tons of pig iron were manufactured in the invaded region, out of a little more than 4,500,000 for all of France, or about 65%. The same percentage holds for cast iron. The effect of the German invasion on other metals was not so

serious, as most of them came from the interior of France. The chemical industries have suffered a relatively small loss for the same reason.

The textile industry consisted, before the war, of about 7,550,000 cotton spindles, throughout France, of which 4,500,000 were in the region invaded, almost all of which were either destroyed or carried back into Germany. Out of 2,365,000 wool spindles, 2,000,000 were in the invaded territory; out of 550,000 linen spindles, 500,000 were in the invaded regions and were either destroyed or removed. The same is true of the looms, of which there were 140,000 in France, over 81,000 of these in the invaded districts.

Over \$120,000,000 worth of machinery has been destroyed. Out of 210 sugar refineries in France, 140 have been destroyed. Out of 3,000 brush factories, over 2,000 were destroyed, totalling a loss of machinery over \$25,000,000. Electric power stations, generating 300,000 kilowatts, were destroyed, with an equipment loss of \$50,000,000. Breweries have lost \$25,000,000 worth of machinery, and machine shops, \$100,000,000 worth. In foundries, \$60,000,000 worth of machinery is gone. None of these damage estimates include land or buildings. Furthermore, almost all of this machinery costs more than three times as much to replace today, so that it can be safely said that over \$4,000,000,000 ~~will~~ worth of machinery will be needed to replace that destroyed or carried away. This includes the stock and raw materials damaged and the damage done to the mines.

Before the war, France used to manufacture 3,000,000 tons of cement per year. In February, 1918, it was manufactured only 400,000 tons, which amount was later diminished through the difficulty of securing coal, a coal proportion of 1918 was in the invaded districts.

The Service of Forests and Water Supply in the Department of Agriculture estimated that 1,200,000 acres of forest land have been destroyed by the enemy. Over half of this wooded area belongs to the government or to the communes. There were about 750,000 acres of woodland within the zone which has not been cared for since the beginning of the war, and which has thereby lost a great deal of its value. We can count on the complete loss of at least one-fourth of this latter area, or a total loss of 1,500,000 acres. Therefore, through the destruction of the Germans and destruction caused by the fighting, France has lost nearly 10% of her lumber and 6½% of her fire wood. The war has destroyed 2,000,000,000 board feet of lumber.

Before the war, there were about 750,000 men in the various building trades, of whom about 70,000 were located in the invaded departments. The total building done throughout France before the war in any one year was less than 7% of the building that would have to be done to replace what has been destroyed in the invaded departments. Therefore, if no building were to be done elsewhere in France after the war, and reckoning that 500,000 of the building tradesmen of France would be available to work on the devastated

ted regions, it would take over twenty years to rebuild.

In general, the total damage in the north of France, including buildings, agricultural industries, furniture and public works, is estimated at about \$14,000,000,000. These were the figures reported by M. Dubois for the committee on subject of the Chamber of Deputies, December 19, 1918. These figures were considered rather high at the time, but a more recent survey by various official and private sources shows that they are fairly accurate, especially in view of the continued depreciation of the franc.

Before the war ended, France had already done quite a little toward solving the problem of reconstruction. As early as December, 1914, the government, then sitting at Bordeaux, appropriated \$600,000 for the immediate assistance of the invaded communes of the Marne. About the same time, Parliament incorporated in the budget for 1915 \$60,000,000 for the use of the Ministry of the Interior in meeting the most urgent needs of the inhabitants of the region. On August 5, 1918, the Minister of Liberated Regions reported to Parliament that, out of this sum, \$36,000,000 had been expended to that date. \$3,000,000 had been spent in the Marne, \$2,000,000 in the Somme, \$1,500,000 in the Oise, \$1,400,000 in the Meurthe-et-Moselle, \$1,300,000 in the Aisne, \$1,000,000 in the Pas-de-Calais, \$1,000,000 in the Meuse, \$500,000 each, in the Vosges, the Seine-et-Marne, and the Nord, and \$2,500,000 for general supplies. To this sum should be added \$6,000,000 spent to drain out the mines and another \$6,000,000 spent for stocking up with building, industrial and agricultural mater-



## III.

Now that we have considered in detail the economic and financial losses, let us look at those losses which cannot be properly valued in dollars and cents. The greatest, irreparable loss that no amount of indemnity in the world can repay, is the sacrifice of two million and a half lives through death, mutilation and disease. Such a loss represents one-fifteenth of the total population-- a source of wealth which is completely annihilated and lost for the restoration of the national life, and which will never answer the call of peace.

The nation owes a sacred debt to the dead--that of caring for their families, their widows and their children. It has also promised to care for and support those whose wounds have rendered them incapable of work. Looked at from the material standpoint, this is a new and heavy charge, which will run into billions of francs in the years to come. But here, again, no figures could give an exact estimate of the national, social, and economic weakening, caused by the disappearance of such a mass of men, who, by virtue of their youth, health and intelligence, constituted the fortune of the nation and of generations to be born.

The re-annexation of Alsace-Lorraine may appear to certain persons to be a sort of recompense for the loss of lives and property, since these two provinces have a population of two million inhabitants. Nevertheless, the ir-



irreparable loss remains not only for all the lives which  
explored the loss of a loved one, but also for the nation as  
a whole, irreplaceable in its very vitality. This applies not  
only to the present, but to the future as well.

Of all the various classes of people, the loss of  
those from the intellectual class is by far the most ir-  
reparable, for they were the repository of precisely the ac-  
quisitions of civilization through which aid the world to es-  
cape from warlike barbarity. In France, the intellectual  
class could supply for its right to maintain its rank and to  
play its role in the work of national reconstruction. In  
fact, it was by the thousands that the savants, sociologists,  
authors, poets, painters and the representative of all  
branches of art laid down their lives. There perished by  
thousands the students of the great schools which are the  
nurseries of physicians, chemists, philosophers, statesmen,  
artists, engineers, lawyers, and agriculturists. Their  
loss constitutes a painful weakening of the intellectual and  
moral radiance of the nation in the world.

Then, too, the labor situation must not be overlooked.  
The shortage of men during the war caused an increase of wages  
and a corresponding independence among the workers. Radical  
Socialism and Bolshevism gained a firm foothold and have been  
a very disturbing element in the industrial situation. Labor  
conditions have also been materially affected the importation  
of foreign laborers, including colored laborers from the  
French provinces in Africa, the Chinese, and those Allied

x soldiers who received their discharges in France and remained to work. These outsiders will help to relieve the shortage of laborers, but at the same time they are creating a good deal of discontent among the native laborers, who resent the intrusion of foreigners. The War had led to the greater recognition of the rights of organized labor in France. Collective bargaining and the right to acquire and hold property had not been permitted to any great extent, but during the war the labor unions became stronger and were able to make their demands heard, and in most cases to have them granted. By force of circumstances, the rights of the women as laborers have also been recognized and the future will accord them more consideration than they have ever known before.

#### IV. Social Effect on Women.

Aside from the stupendous losses in life and property at the front, there is one fact connected with the war which is in some ways of more far-reaching importance than any of the others, and that is the effect that the war had on the women of France, not referring to those who were in the areas occupied by the enemy and who were ravished and enslaved by the beastly foe, but to those in that portion of France occupied by the allied armies.

War always lowers moral standards. The very nature of the excitement; the shifting and changing; the breaking up of friendships and families; the meeting of men and women under conditions that would not be tolerated in peace times; the exposure which women underwent in assuming the new posi-

time and the possibilities inherent to the war; the long and often protracted absences of husbands, brothers and sweethearts; the association with strange men under strange conditions; the removal of restraint and absence of friends who would ordinarily exert a restraining moral influence; the suffering of their families and of themselves, due to poverty, and the correspondingly strong temptation and opportunity to sell their virtue to obtain the means of relieving this suffering; make us wonder that the moral standards of the women remained as high as they did.

Before considering this phase of the question further, however, it will be necessary to study the conditions and existing moral standards of France before the war. With these clearly in mind, it will be possible to understand better many seemingly improbable things.

To begin with, we must realize that the moral standards of France and Southern Europe are not those of the United States. We must also realize that the peoples of Southern Europe, as a whole, are warm-blooded and passionate. Their loves, hates, and jealousies are correspondingly stronger than those of the people of the northern races. Consequently, the tendency toward social relations between men and women is stronger. Among the upper classes, this condition is partly counteracted by the strict social custom requiring that some older person or member of the family shall accompany a young lady when she is away from her father's house. But this rule was not always enforced among the lower

classes, and during the period of the war, it was, by force of circumstances, much disregarded by all classes. The hot-blooded young people were quick to take advantage of the liberties allowed them.

In spite of the strict regulation regarding chaperonage of young ladies, custom allows them, after they are betrothed, even greater liberties than are permitted on this side of the Atlantic. The young man to whom a young lady is betrothed is allowed practically the same relations with her as he will have after they are actually married. The sexual relation thus permitted has been the ruination of many a girl. This custom is partly the result of "free love", which is permitted, and in some places even countenanced and encouraged in France.

The average Frenchman does not possess that quality which we call, in us, "false modesty". The immodesty and lack of privacy at the public lavatories and toilets would be shocking in the extreme to a cultured American. The conditions that exist at these places make for great familiarity between the sexes, and in some cases are so bad as to cause the people to lose practically all modesty and self-respect. Of course, this does not always have a bad effect, as the natives have grown up from childhood under these conditions, and consequently think nothing of them. To the Allied soldier, however, these familiarities proved a stimulus to lust and were indirectly the cause of much immorality.

Another French characteristic of which advantage



was often taken by Allied soldiers was that of hospitality. The French were very cordial in their welcome to those who were assisting them in the great struggle. Their homes and their wine were at the disposal of the soldiers whom they admitted as guests. In the cafes and stores, this hospitality was also shown, and afforded opportunity for taking many liberties with the women.

One thing which did much to prejudice the French women in favor of the American soldier was his prepossessing personality and clean-cut, manly appearance and bearing. This, combined with the reports of America's wealth, and the shortage of men in France,--there were 2,000,000 more women than men in France before the war,--made him very desirable as a prospective husband. Many a simple, unsophisticated girl was thus deluded by some unprincipled soldier into believing that he would marry her and take her to America with him. Then, owing to the custom of permitting great liberties between betrothed, she sold her birthright of virtue to the scoundrel who had falsely promised to be true to her. There is no way of finding out the exact number of cases of this sort, but that the number is very large is proven by the fact that there are estimated to be at least 100,000 illegitimate children in France as the result of the American soldiers alone. And many illegitimate births have either been nipped in the bud or not reported. As the American soldiers were leaving France, the ports of embarkation were besieged by thousands of women with babies, seeking the fathers of their children, but they found them not.



Among the classes of women who fell easy prey to the lustful soldier were the factory and munition plant girls. They were working under conditions that afforded them very little protection from vice in all its forms. Without the restraining influences of home and friends, they were free to seek many forms of amusement and distraction in which they would not otherwise have indulged. Their wages were low and their living conditions poor. When soldiers came along with plenty of money and a willingness to spend it on the girls for the privilege of intercourse with them, it was a great temptation. Perhaps the girl was supporting a widowed mother and some younger brothers and sisters, as well as trying to provide necessities for herself. That to such a one the opportunity to earn as much in one night as her wages would amount to in a month was not to be lightly considered, is proven by the enormous toll of victims who sold their birthright for a mess of pottage. Investigations by social service workers showed that conditions, around munitions plants in particular, were almost too awful to put in print.

Of the direct consequences of all this unregulated intercourse, none could be more terrible than the astounding prevalence of venereal diseases. In the regulated and restricted districts, the prostitutes could be examined, and disease held in check to a certain extent, but this was impossible in the unregulated traffic carried on by the working girls. From the beginning of the war, the number of cases of venereal disease increased at an alarming rate. The result was that many workers and soldiers were incapac-

tated and became a hindrance rather than a help to their country. These diseased women became one of the greatest menaces that the Allied Armies had to encounter. They rendered a large number of men unfit for duty, and reduced the efficiency of many more. Those men who were found to be diseased were isolated in special camps and given medical attention. The total number treated in the American Expeditionary Forces reached into the hundreds of thousands. Many of them were very difficult to cure. When the A. E. F. left France last July, 60,000 diseased men were left in the venereal camp at Brest. Only about one out of every three venereal cases was ever reported. Those that were not reported were treated by friends, French physicians, or by the patients themselves. Therefore, we can see that the number of soldiers infected was about three times as large as the number who were treated and of whom we have a record. The effect of this wide dissemination of disease will be felt for many years by those of the present and future generations, both in France and in America, as the American army doctors could not always detect dormant cases.

Another condition, and one that affects directly the divorce question, is the improper relations of the French wives and sweethearts at home to foreign soldiers while their husbands and fiancés were at the front. Many a girl came home on furlough only to find that the affections of his wife or betrothed had been stolen by someone who had not, as yet, even seen the front line trenches. If her affections had not been entirely taken from him, he probably discovered that she had been having social relations with

some other war, and might even have become diseased. This condition resulted in great trouble between the Allied and the French soldiers, especially during the period after the Armistice.

As the result of friendships formed during the war, there were very few hundred thousand cartridges in France by the American soldiers alone. Many of these are happy ones, but quite a number are not. This partly due to the fact that it was hard for men used to different customs and standards to accustom themselves to the new ones under which they were compelled to live. As an interesting sidelight on this particular subject, it is reported that, of the 50,000 war rifles brought to the United States by returning soldiers, fully 12,000 have returned to France because they could not adapt themselves to the new and strange conditions in which they found themselves.

### C. CONCLUSION.

This is only a partial summary of the total losses and effects of the war on France, but it will serve to show that the country has suffered and suffered heavily in the great struggle for the salvation of democracy, and that she still faces one of the most stupendous of problems in trying to restore herself to the position that she held before the great conflict. She is settling down to the task, and is making good progress, considering the odds she is facing, but the wheels of her economic machinery are full of sand, and it will be some time before they are running smoothly again. We believe, however, that the indomitable spirit of the French will conquer and that France will again be a power in Central Europe.